

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for the treatment of a failing heart, comprising:

means for reducing the cross sectional area of the heart in at least one plane.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the means includes a tension member for drawing at least two walls of the heart chamber toward each other.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the means includes a compression member for urging at least two walls of the heart chamber toward each other.

4. The apparatus in accordance with claim 3, wherein the compression member includes a balloon.

5. The apparatus in accordance with claim 3, wherein the means further comprises a frame for supporting the compression member.

6. The apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the means includes a clamp.

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7. An apparatus for reducing the tension in the wall of the heart chamber in at least one cross sectional plane, comprising:

a draw member having first and second ends; and  
anchoring means disposed at each end of the draw member for engagement with the chamber wall.

8. An apparatus in accordance with claim 7, wherein the draw member includes a tension member.

9. The apparatus in accordance with claim 7, wherein the draw member includes a clamp.

10. The apparatus in accordance with claim 9, wherein the anchor members are biased toward each other.

11. An apparatus for reducing the tension in the wall of a heart chamber in at least one cross sectional plane, comprising:

a compression member having an atraumatic surface for placement against the exterior of the heart.

12. The apparatus in accordance with claim 11, wherein the compression member includes a balloon.

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13. The apparatus in accordance with claim 11, further comprising a frame for supporting the compression member.

14. The apparatus in accordance with claim 13, wherein the frame includes means for attachment of the frame to the heart.

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